



Kuwait Naval Base coalition moves Joint Logistics Over the Shore

By Staff Sgt. Ward Gros

143rd Transportation Command

Experts in the field of military amphibious operations wonder if the level of operations conducted at the Kuwait Naval Base has exceeded the same type of operations conducted during the Korean War.

But no one questions that the missions successfully accomplished by the coalition forces at KNB far exceeded most expectations. The coalition continues to contribute to moving supplies to Iraq and then bringing our people and equipment home again.

As of July 16, the 143rd TRANSCOM operation center at KNB reports that the deployment phase of operations alone has involved a six nation coalition force comprised of Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia which moved approximately 110 ships; 23,000 pallets; 5,340 containers; 17,000 people; made 200 helicopter sorties, and had 250 beach landings. These numbers increase daily as troops and equipment continue to arrive.

And when the military requested more from the coalition at KNB, the coalition answered the call and took on redeployment.

The same July 16 report states that the redeployment phase of operations currently involves five nations: Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and the United Kingdom. As of July 16 the coalition redeployed approximately 47 ships; 2,400 vehicles; 10,000 pallets; 1,900 containers; 14,500 people; made 50 helicopter sorties; and had 50 plus beach landings. These numbers also increase daily as troops and equipment continue to redeploy.

“Soldiers and service personnel from Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and coalition forces contribute to make the Kuwaiti Naval Base mission an enormous success,” said Col. Michael Kaczmarek, the commander of U.S. Army Forces at KNB and a senior operations officer of the 143rd Transportation Command. “Our country and coalition forces are indebted to these personnel for their extreme sacrifice and dedication.”

Kuwaiti hospitality also has a significant role in our success, Kaczmarek said.

The Honorable Richard H. Jones, U.S. Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, met with the Kuwaiti Chief of Naval Forces, Maj. Gen. Ahmad Y. Al Mulla, and his staff in April. Jones thanked Al Mulla for the hospitality and cooperation he and his country have provided the leaders and service members of the United States.



Stanford Elementary to open soon

By Cheryl Parr

General Stanford Elementary School

The staff of the General Stanford Elementary School is excited about the opening of the new school Sept. 2. The new building promises to be a remarkable learning facility with state-of-the-art technology.

The school supplies list for each grade level has been finalized and will be at local stores and post locations by Aug. 8.

Parents are reminded that because the administrative offices at General Stanford is not yet open they can register their children at either Lee Hall Elementary or Greenwood Elementary. If your child is already registered in another Newport News school there is no need to fill out transfer requests. Students' records for those already registered will be automatically transferred to General Stanford for all Kindergarten through fifth grade students living on Fort Eustis.

Plans continue to proceed for the school to open on time. If for some reason the building will not be ready for the Sept. 2 opening, parents will be notified about alternative plans. Open House for all Newport News elementary schools is scheduled for Aug. 28 from the hours of 4 - 7 p.m. Details concerning Open House will be mailed to parents prior. At this event students and parents will have the opportunity to meet the General Stanford staff.

For more information, contact Mrs. Parr or Mr. Martinez at General Stanford's temporary office number, 591-4518.



Memories from the front: One soldier's story

By Spc. Alexandria Masiak

40th Public Affairs Detachment

Editor's Note: This begins an on-going series called "Memories from the Front" -- entries taken directly from the personal journal of a soldier deployed with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

After rereading the journal I kept during the first half of the war, it reminded me of how important the daily Battle Update Briefings became to everyone in my unit. It was our only link to the outside world and what was happening around us. Despite how decisively close we were to the front lines, without the televised reporting from news channels like CNN, playing 24-seven on T.V inside the Tactical Operations Center just two tents down from ours, we would've felt the distance between back home and being in the middle of a desert even more.

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It is 1:39 a.m. Eastern time right now. The local time out here on the outskirts of Baghdad, Iraq, is 10:40 a.m.: almost lunch time. I'm only thinking about food because I am out of cigarettes

We each get three bottles of water per day. I always leave a third of the bottle of water to add instant coffee. With two heaters from our box of meal-ready-to-eat, leftovers and an empty MRE bag to stick the bottle in, I'm in business. Earlier this morning, the Sir gave me his packet of mocha-flavored coffee and another heater. I have about a dozen of them stashed away from earlier trades, but I'm beginning to run low on Folger's.

When it comes to MREs, we each know what the other guy likes, for future trading. For instance, I'm all about the coffee and creamer packets. The Private is the milkshake-monger. The Sergeant goes for the candies. The Sir also has first dibs on the barbeque and cheese steak burger meals since he's in charge.

I'm starting this journal now because we didn't have electricity at our hooch at the New Jersey Kabal when we first arrived. That was in Kuwait. We stayed there for about two and a half weeks before packing our rucks and heading for the border.

That trip was amazing, our supposed "convoy." Had me scared most of the time. It took us approximately four days to make our way to these foreign parts, altogether bypassing our original stop at FARP Shell, mind you. It had been "compromised" we later learned over the radio. At the time, we were maybe 50 kilometers away from the scuffle. Eventually, another spot was found but we ended up sleeping beside our vehicles that night.

I will never forget "Serial 2, GAC 6", "God Squad" or "in the hole... out the hole... no, in the hole" or the whole maddening experience of coming to a "herring bone" stop, getting out, pulling security, checking our "fix-a-flat" tire and performing other maintenance (our engine overheated about four hours into the ride), "mounting up" and finally, not rolling for another 20 minutes. Meanwhile, mildly baking in our charcoal-filled chemical suits and other protective gear (flak jackets, masks and brain buckets) as we sat inside our humvees on the side of some narrow lane in the middle of a great wide desert owned by Saddam Hussein... with a dash of mines over here and a dab of fear over there.

And talk about choke point. I imagine we were part of a 500-600 vehicle traffic jam that lasted, oh, a good seven or so hours, if not more. Not your average traffic jam. This one had tanks, missiles and dust. So much dust that we stopped caring. I drove a good portion of the way and slept well in my sleeping bag on the nights we had to pull over. It's hard to describe the amount of anxiety that was occurring within my already fragile state of 24-hour alertness.

Last night, I'm sitting on my cot just outside our tent. Had washed my hair and face and just finished brushing my teeth. Nice cool air blowing, not much dust, considering. Felt glorious. It was the first time I had washed my hair in over a week. Then, Chief pulls up in his hillbilly jalopy. We're talking and there they go — we could see the MLRSs being launched. As we sat and watched the light show, we discussed the most recent updates.

Four dead, five men are missing, two aircraft down— and Chief thinks the other one is waiting out the dust storm that had kicked in yesterday. This morning, the Sir comes back from the BUB with the news that they have two POWs. Presumably soldiers from the missing helicopter. Oh, and we have about three thousand of their soldiers. My first reaction: Does that mean we have to feed and water them? As it stands, we only have a five-day supply for ourselves.